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SUBJECT: GEORGIA: 2008 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

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¶1. (U) BEGIN TEXT.

Georgia has granted blanket over flight clearance to all U.S. military aircraft engaged in operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Georgia contributed over 2,000 troops to counterterrorism efforts in Iraq and became a contributing nation to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. However, Georgia withdrew its troops from Iraq during the August war with Russia to provide for homeland defense.

The Georgian government continues to improve border security operations and worked to eliminate corruption at border checkpoints, focusing its efforts on stopping the smuggling of contraband, including money, illegal drugs, and all types of weapons (chemical, nuclear and biological) that could support terrorism. There were significant improvements in infrastructure at the major border crossing checkpoints: through DOE's Second Line of Defense Program (SLD) a border crossing at Tsodna/Lagodekhi (on the border with Azerbaijan) was completed. Seven remote border posts are in the final stages of completion which will limit illegal crossings on the Azeri-Georgian border. In 2008, sixty-one portal monitors have been or are being installed at various sites throughout the country to detect radioactive material and devices. At 15 border checkpoints, Passive Infrared Sensors have been installed. The SLD program has trained individuals in the Georgian Border Police, Customs, and the Institute of Physics, enhancing the Government of Georgia's radioactive material detection capabilities. The Department of Justice conducted a bulk cash smuggling seminar with the Office of Prosecutor General, Border Police, Ministry of Interior, and Customs.

Border crossings into Russia from the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia continue, but were not under the control of the Government of Georgia. This situation allowed for the unrestricted and unidentified flow of people, goods, and other items from Russia into these regions. Since the August 2008 conflict, the Administrative Boundary Lines between Georgia and the conflict regions are heavily militarized and movements across the boundary are controlled, although no formal customs checks or procedures exist.

END TEXT.

TEFFT